IN SEARCH OF THE NIGHTINGALE.

I told my friends what I had heard,
The haunting song of this small bird,
The boyhood memories it had stirred,
They asked me where it had occurred.

"Three Nightingales I heard today,"
To my friends at work I say.
"Near the missile testing bay,
As to work I made my way,"

"That's good news Philip," Walter said,
And smiling John just nods his head.
"Though the bird's territorial, so I've read,
The woods do cover quite a spread.

"I've heard one at the village end,
And John, on whom you can depend,
Has heard one at the armoury end,
By the fuel dump, past the bend."

"That's five nightingales we know for sure.'
Walter remarked, counting up the score.
"And for all we know there could be more,
That put up with the jet engine's roar."

Then John suggested that we should,
During the lunch hour, if we could,
Pay a visit to the test site wood,
To spot the Nightingale would be good.

Walter warned, "But we must take care,
Not to disturb the Nightingales there.
To frighten them now would be unfair,
And risk breaking up the nesting pair."

At lunch time then we met as agreed,
And made for the woods with utmost speed,
While Walter impressed us with the need,
His advice of the morning to take heed.

So quietly we entered the still woodland,
Near the top where the Birches stand.
Walter, with binoculars and camera in hand,
And recorder playing the bird song grand.

The canopy there was cool and green,
And many types of flower were seen,
Spotted Orchid, Herb Paris green.
Marsh Orchid with its purple sheen.

Fragrant Wild Onion too were there,
The appetizing aroma filled the air.
And a mossy carpet every where,
We walked upon with delicate care.

And in the silence of the wood,
As, listening carefully, we stood,
We heard the sound we knew we should,
The song, so clear, so pure, so good.

It was Walter now who led the way,
On that enchanted, magic day.
Warning us not a word to say,
In case we scared the bird away.

An answering song we soon then heard,
And before very long saw the small brown bird,
Flitting low in the shrubs that it preferred.
Walter smiled then, for he had not erred.

At last I had seen the bird, there and then,
That had charmed a young boy at Aga Fen,
Had inspired poets to take up the pen,
And would live forever in the hearts of Men.